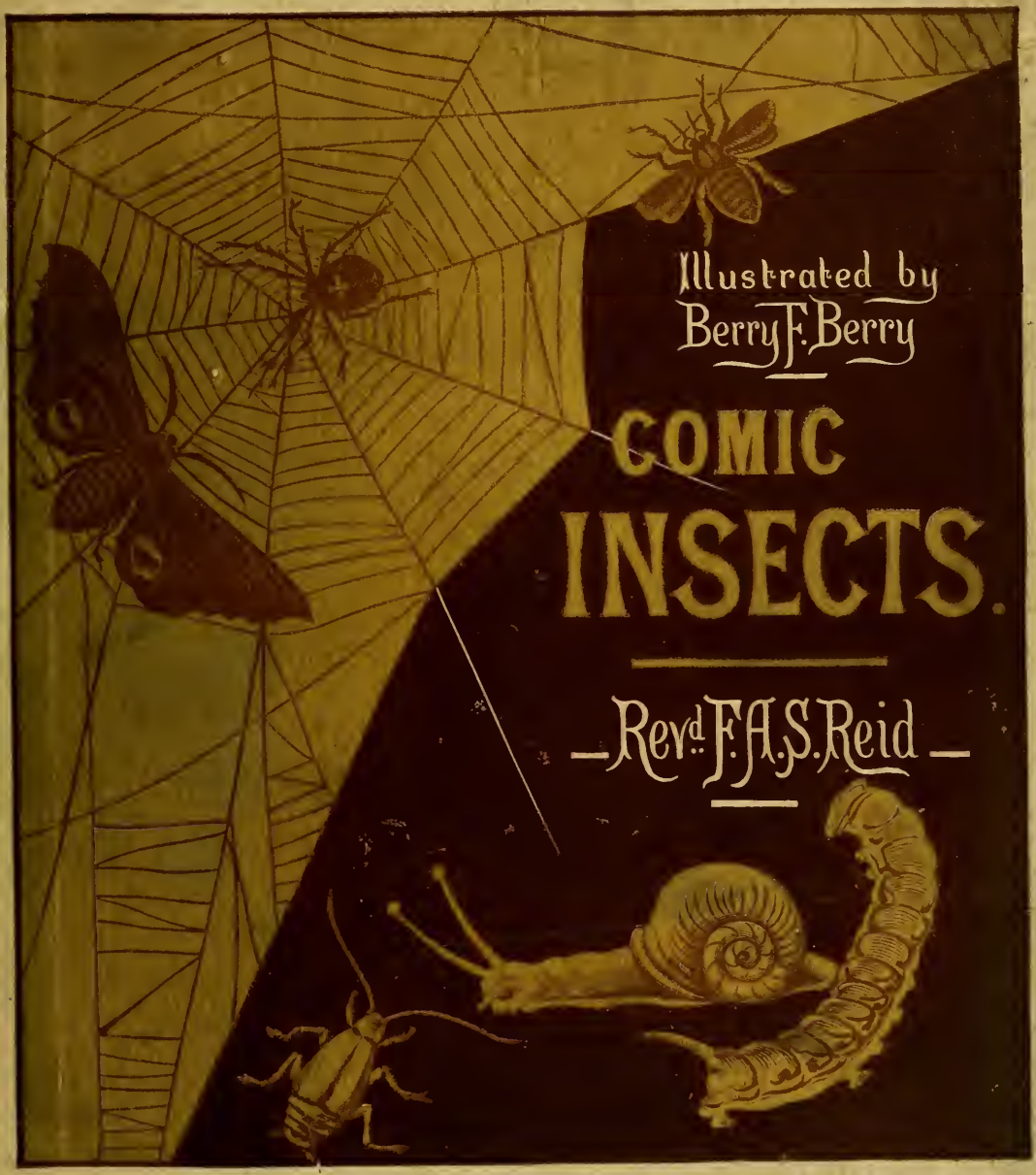

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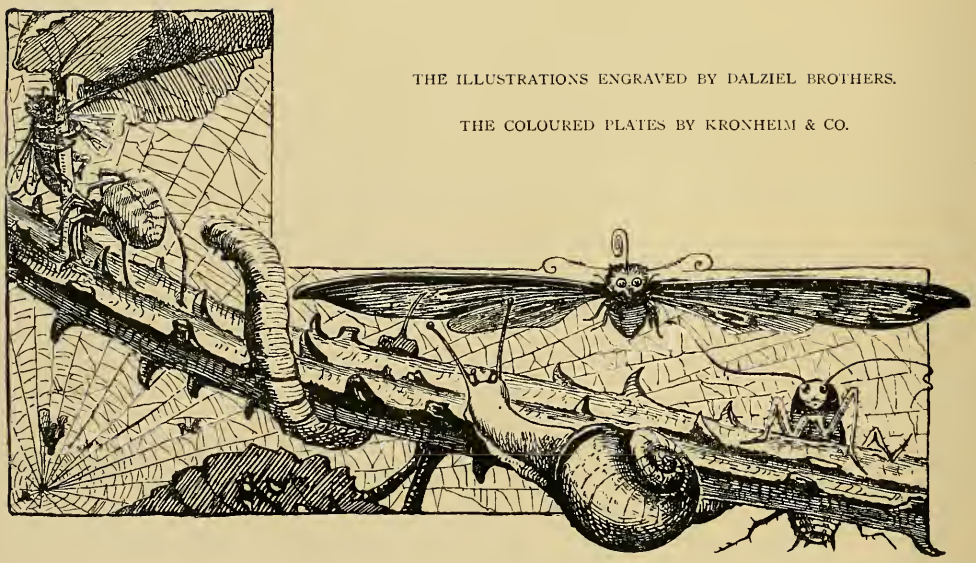

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COMIC INSECTS.

BY

The Rev. F. A. S. REID, M.A.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS

BY

BERRY F. BERRY.

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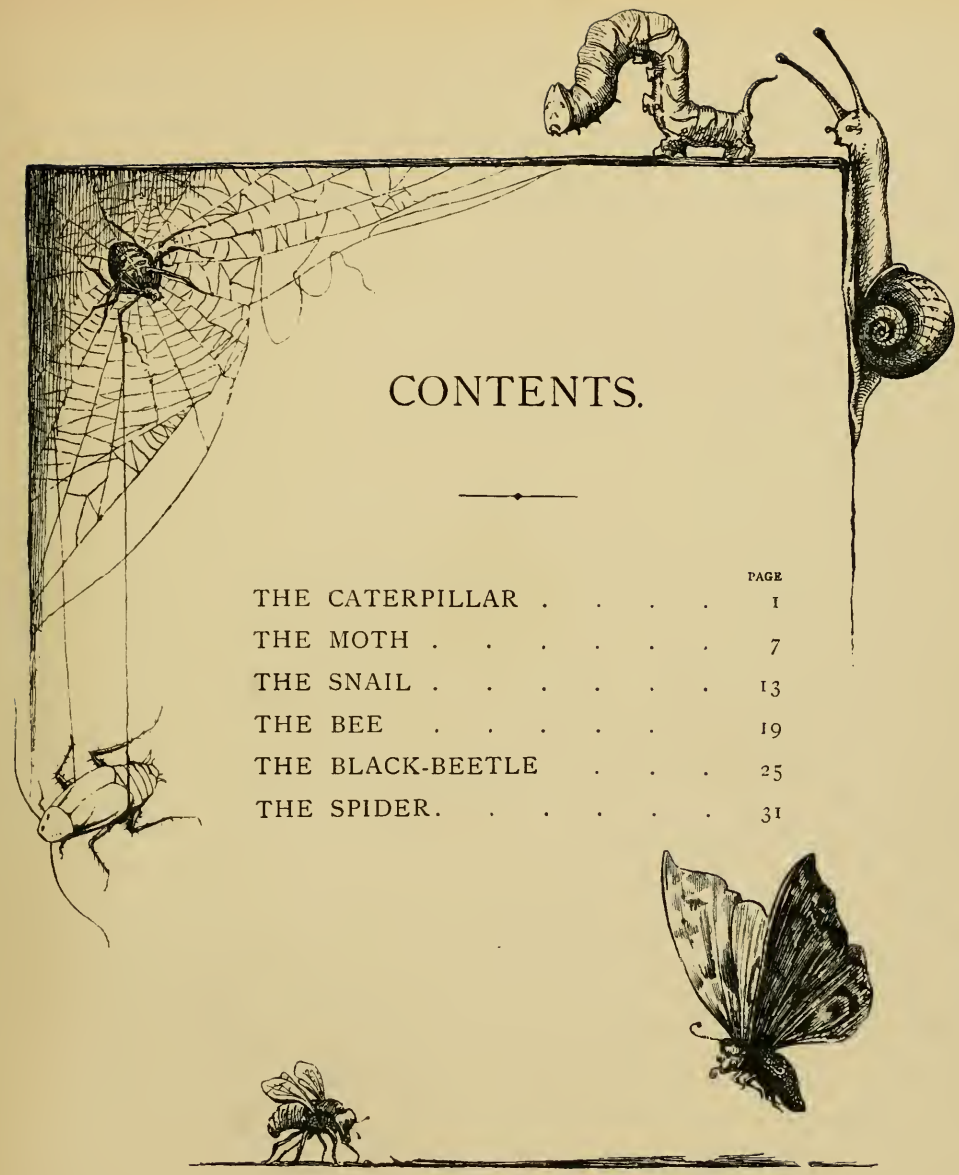

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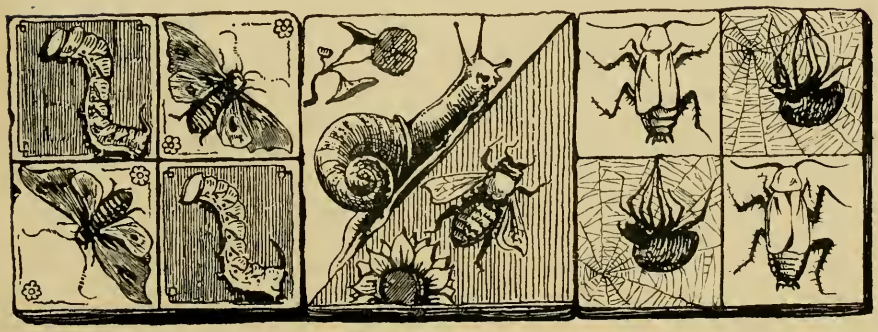
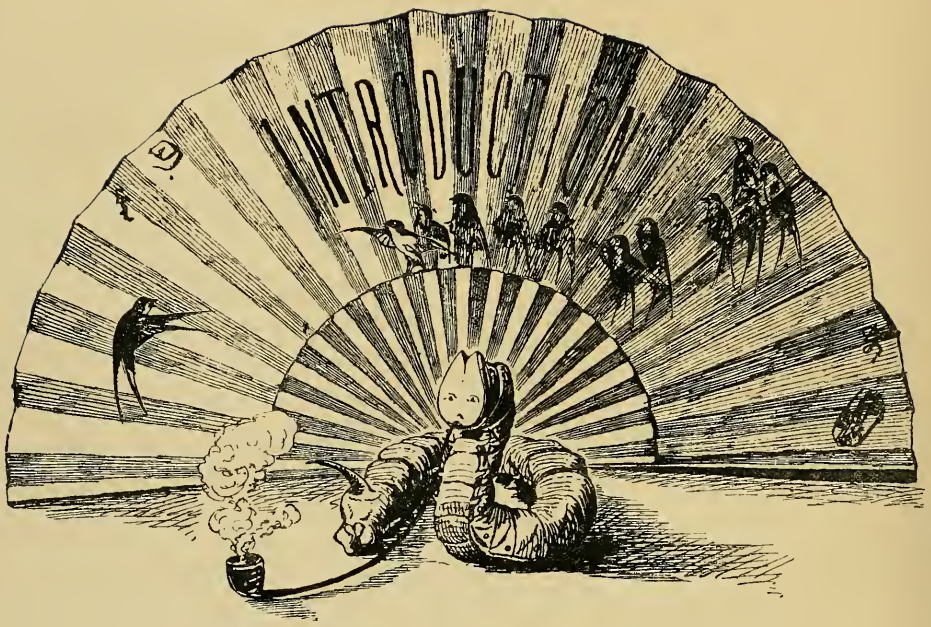
OH, wonder I much what this book contains!
Can Insects talk, and do they have brains?
I always thought that these queer little things
Were made up entirely of legs, wings, and stings.

A Black-Beetle teach me! And what, Bumble-Bee,
In all the wide world can you say unto me?
And surely a Caterpillar never has read?
With green leaves for books, he would eat them instead;
While neither a Moth nor a Spider could tell
How a pen should be held, or correctly could spell.
And as for poor Snailey,—it's more than absurd,
He never could read a one-syllable word!
But I've heard of the School Board, and now it's appalling
To think that a Moth or a Snail may be calling
And telling me too, as their little eyes glisten,
Their funny wee lessons, if only I'll listen.

* * * * * *

Yes! they talk in a language that all is their own,
And here into English you'll find it has grown;
Where pictures will shew, and the rhymes they will say,
How Insects can work, talk, and laugh, and be gay.





COMIC INSECTS.

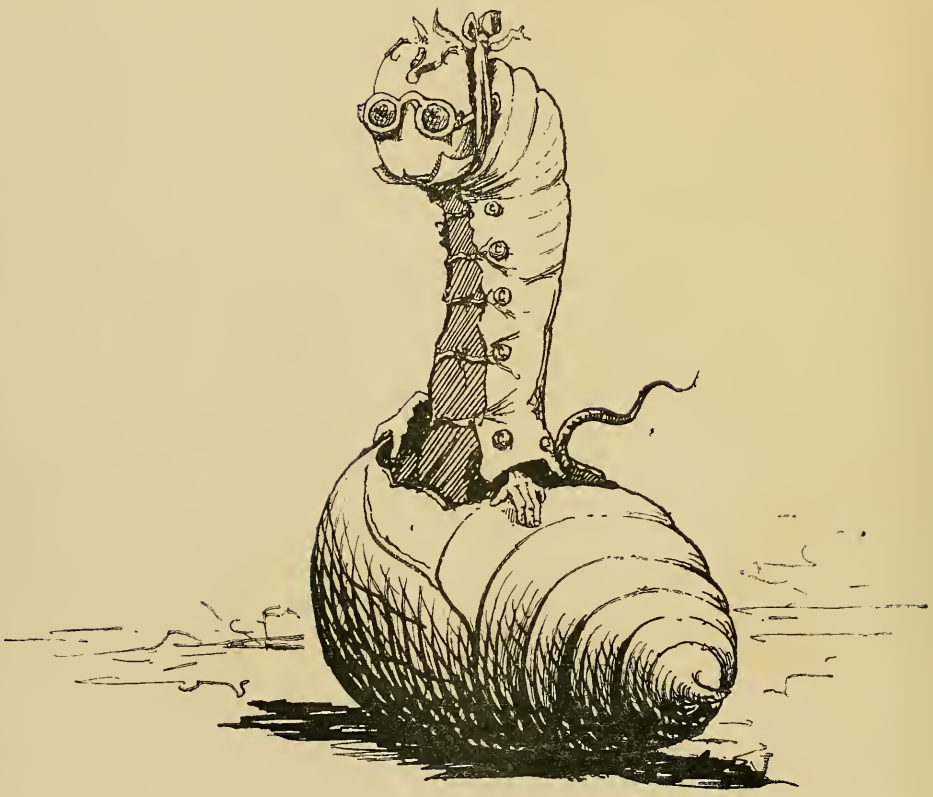
How queer a procession is passing this way,
Of insects all talking; come, hear what they say!
The sight is as strange as their words they are true,
And you 'll laugh as they offer their lessons to you.

COMIC INSECTS.

"Led astray."

THE CATERPILLAR.

I'm a Caterpillar green,
Not the prettiest you have seen,
And my Chrysalis I enter rather loth;
Though I know that in the spring
I shall rise on feathered wing
In the costume of a fascinating Moth.



"I'm a Caterpillar green."

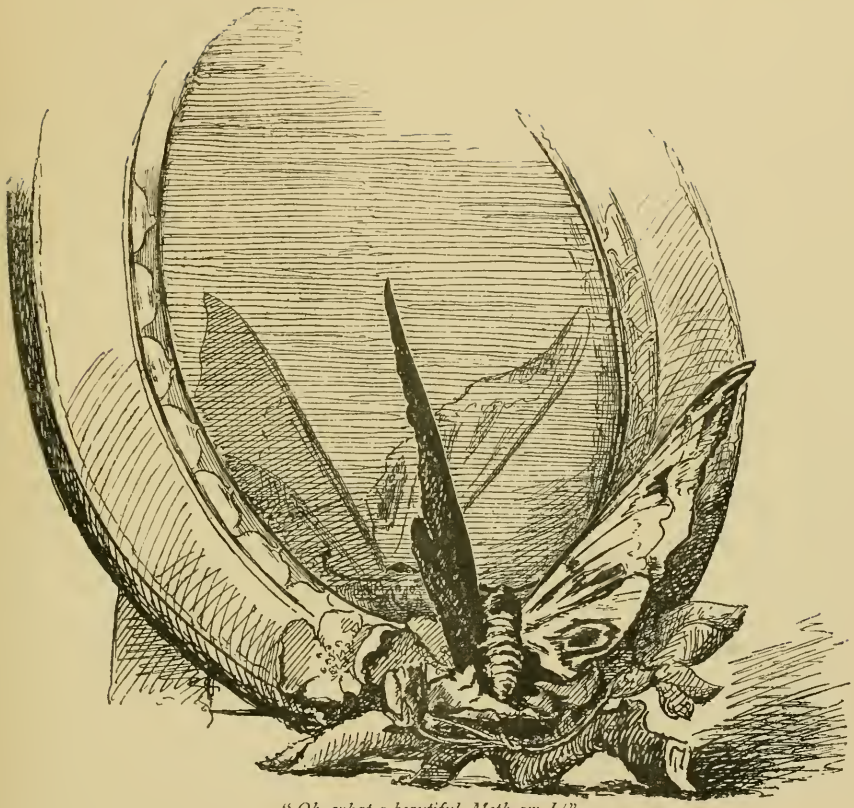
Little likeness you will spy,
With the cleverest little eye,
'Twixt your green-coated friend of to-day
And the airy form that sails
When the golden sunlight pales,
And the owl flies abroad for his prey.

"And my Chrysalis I enter rather loth."

Yet the same we are indeed,
Though the riddle's hard to read,
One, the Moth and the Caterpillar green;
And still stranger things than this,
Which no little one should miss,
In the Picture Book of Nature can be seen.

"If you'll only deign to lend your ear."

So I think, my little friend,
If you'll only deign to lend
Your ear to these few words that I say,
Ne'er again will you rely
For convictions on the eye,
As appearances have often led astray.



"Oh, what a beautiful Moth am I!"

THE MOTH.

Oh, what a beautiful Moth am I!
Colours so gay, and sparkling each eye,
Nobody ever would guess, I ween,
I once was a Caterpillar all in green.

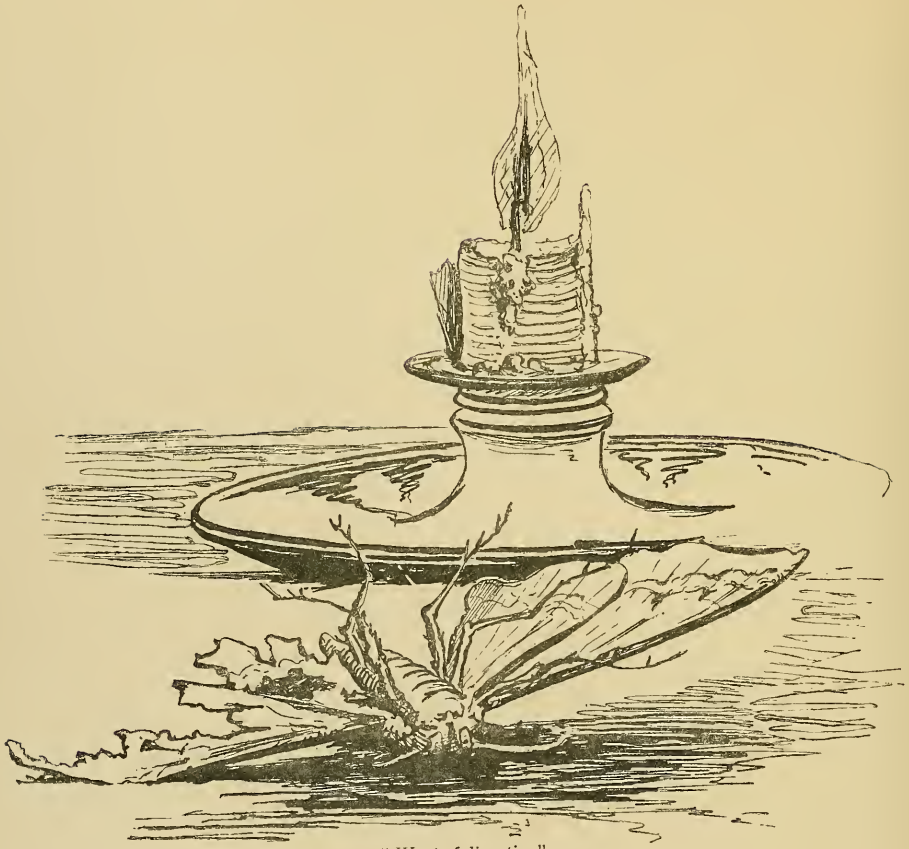
"With silver and gold I have decked me too."

I 've taken me feathers of brightest hue,
With silver and gold I have decked me too:
No, no! you never would guess, I ween,
I once was a Caterpillar all in green.

With a tardy foot no longer I crawl
'Neath the shady leaves, or on ivied wall;
But, joyously floating in airy height,
I wander abroad in the pale moonlight;

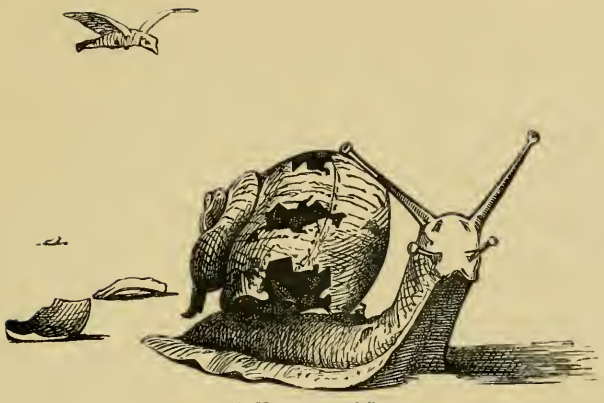
"I wander abroad in the pale moonlight."

Or join the Elves as they dance and sing
In the circle green of the fairy ring,
Or tease a poor Daisy that's trying to keep
Its big yellow eye from my curious peep.



"Want of discretion."

But sometimes I fly to a treacherous light,
That mimics a star in a darkling night;
And too late I learn, with my poor singed wings,
The evil that want of discretion oft brings.

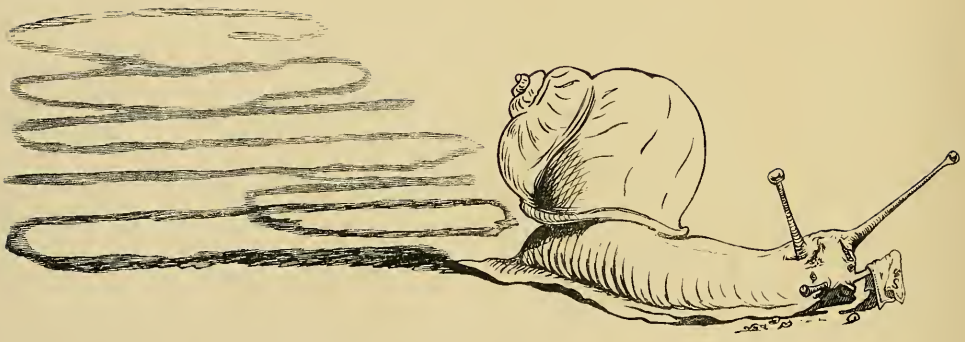


"How very pale."

THE SNAIL.

Poor little Snail,
How very pale,
Your cheek is blanched with fear!
What horrid dread
Has made you shed
So many a slimy tear?

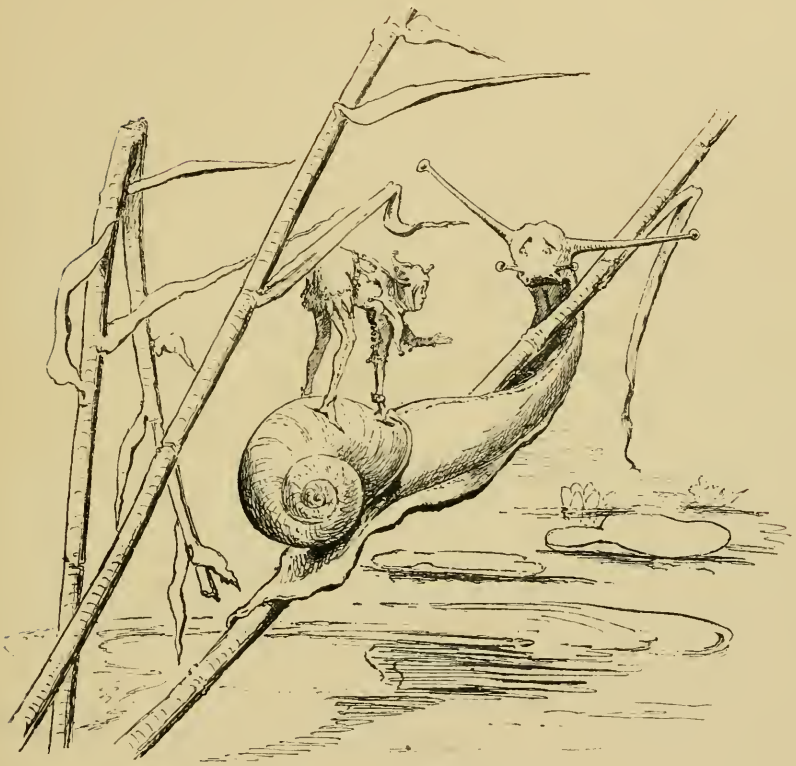
Come! faster crawl
Along the wall,
Leave care behind,—all's well!
That seeming pack
Upon your back
Is near an empty shell.



"*Leave care behind.*"

Come! smile again,
And let the rain
Of tears at once be dry;
Faint-hearted quite,
And far from right,
Before you're hurt to cry.

No one will doubt
Who thinks about
This great world spinning round,
That all have hours
When sorrow's showers
Make April all around.



" That seeming pack
Upon your back
Is near an empty shell."

But May and June
Follow full soon,
And joy succeeds to sorrow;
So dry the tear,
And from the year
Your cheering lesson borrow.

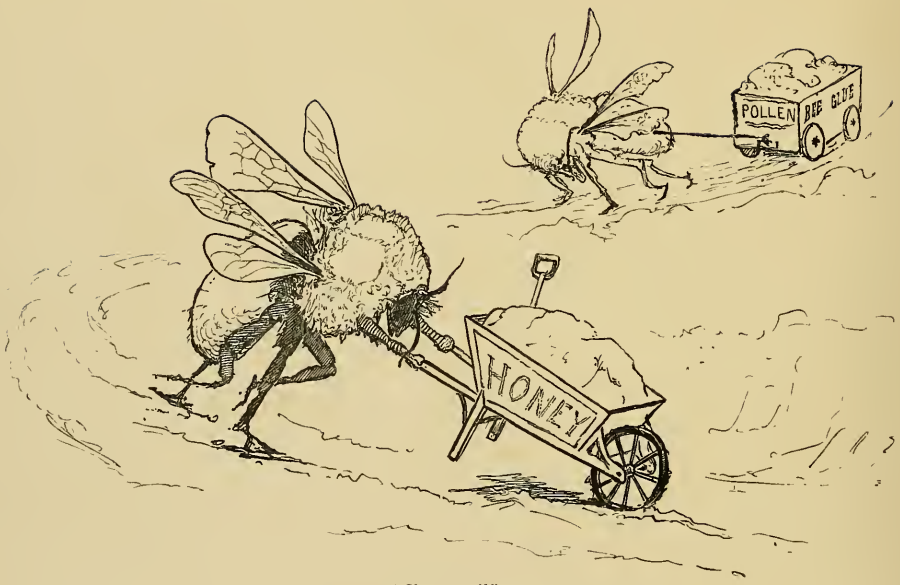
"Ah, Snailey! see."

Ah, Snailey! see
To you and me
Our burdens oft appear
Much heavier far
Than what they are,
When we give way to fear.

"Buz! buz! buz!
Over blossoms heavy laden."

THE BEE.

Buz! buz! buz!
Over blossoms heavy laden with their treasures;
Hear its music as it rifles
From the flowers their seeming trifles;
We may watch it in the sunshine at our leisure.



"Hearty toil."

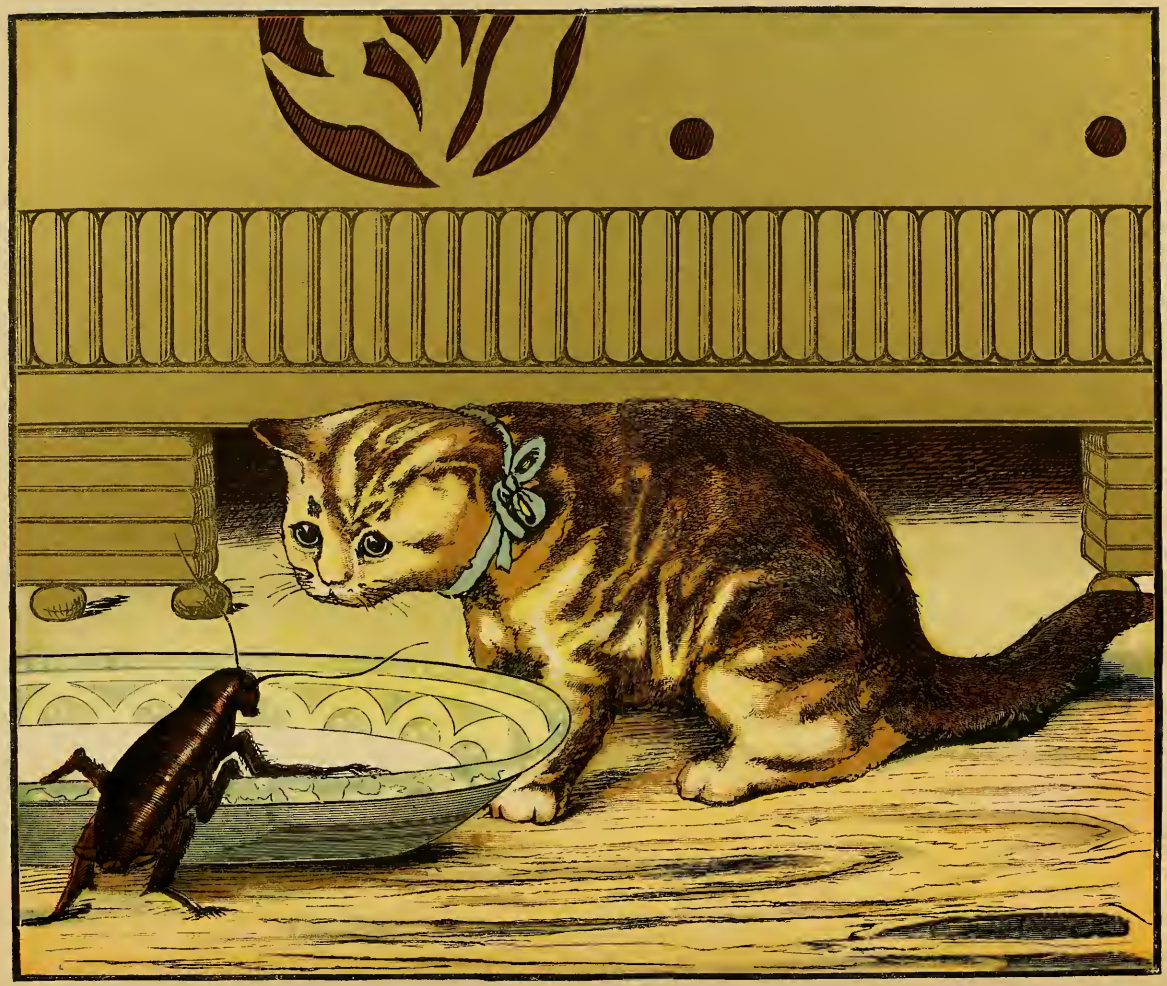
See! their secrets it espying
In their tinted depths while prying,
As it works thro' the long summer day;
"Be in earnest in your quest,
Hearty toil brings well-earned rest,"
Seems the burden of its light-hearted lay.

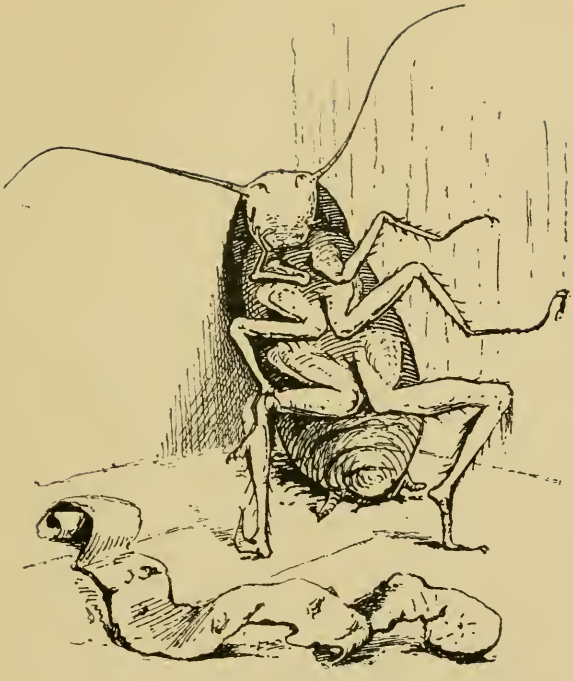
"Well-earned rest."

Lessons here of self-reliance,
And "defence but not defiance,"
As Volunteers are taught by the Bee.
As it works on active wing,
Self-protected with its sting,
'T is a grand working model, good to see;

" . . Its music as it rifles."

Pointing out how each is sharing
In the common task, and bearing
His just portion; where no idler is seen:
All are busy in the hive
Where these happy workmen thrive,
And they're loyal, every one, to their Queen.





"This poor Black-Beetle's ill!"

THE BLACK-BEETLE.

Oh, dear! Oh, dear!
I sadly fear
This poor Black-Beetle's ill;
And to him now
No use, I trow,
Is the cleverest doctor's skill.

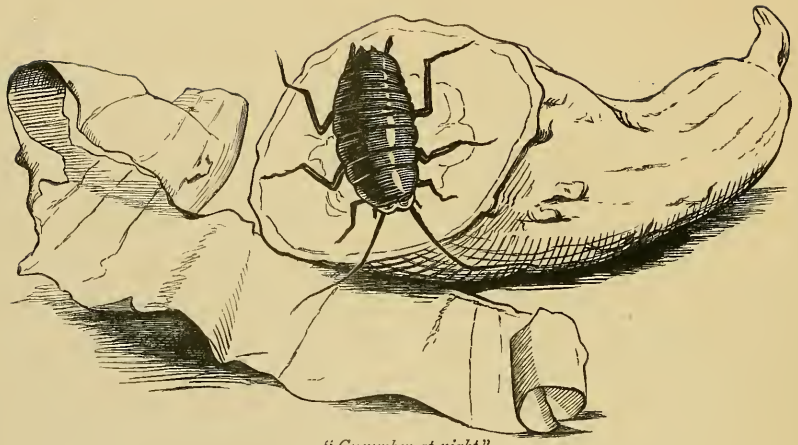
5

"*No medical sage*
His pain can assuage.

No medical sage
His pain can assuage.
You can see at a glance how bad
He's made himself,
All thro' his pelf:
Isn't it dreadfully sad?

"When the cook was asleep."

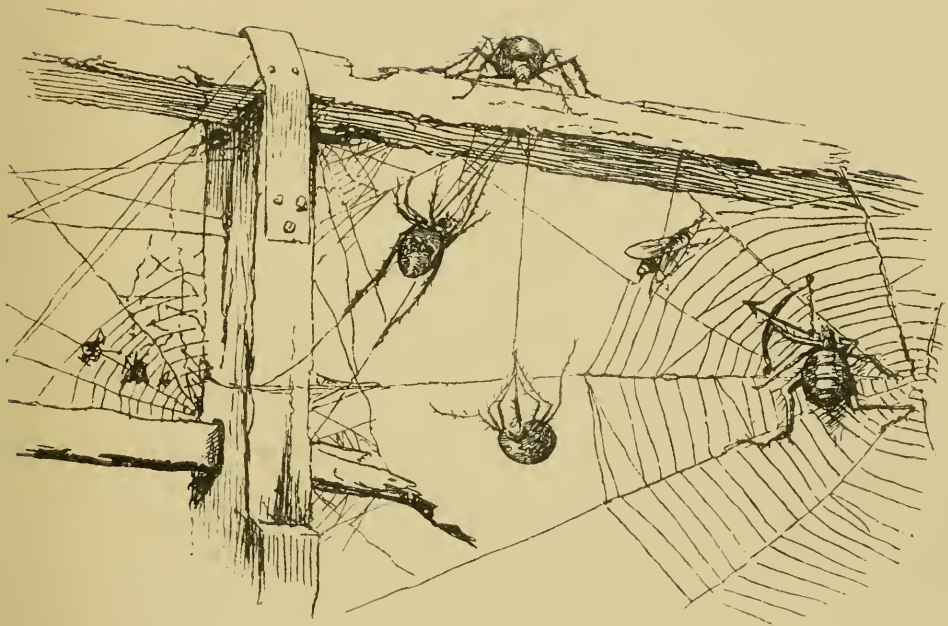
For wandering wide
On the floor he spied,
Last night when the cook was asleep,
And rejoiced to find
Some cucumber rind,
And now no more he will creep!



"Cucumber at night."

Yes! sad though it be,
This little "B-B"
Would follow his own appetite;
He could never say "no,"
When it tempted him; so
His epitaph is, "Serve him right!"

And thus tearfull-ee,
He begs you and me
His case as a warning to mind;
Cucumber at night
To regard with affright,
And never to eat up the rind.



"Spiders,—heugh!"

THE SPIDER.

Sp . . . i . . . ders,—heugh!
Horrible forms that creep and crawl,
And hang their webs from ceiling and wall!

"As they joy in the breeze."

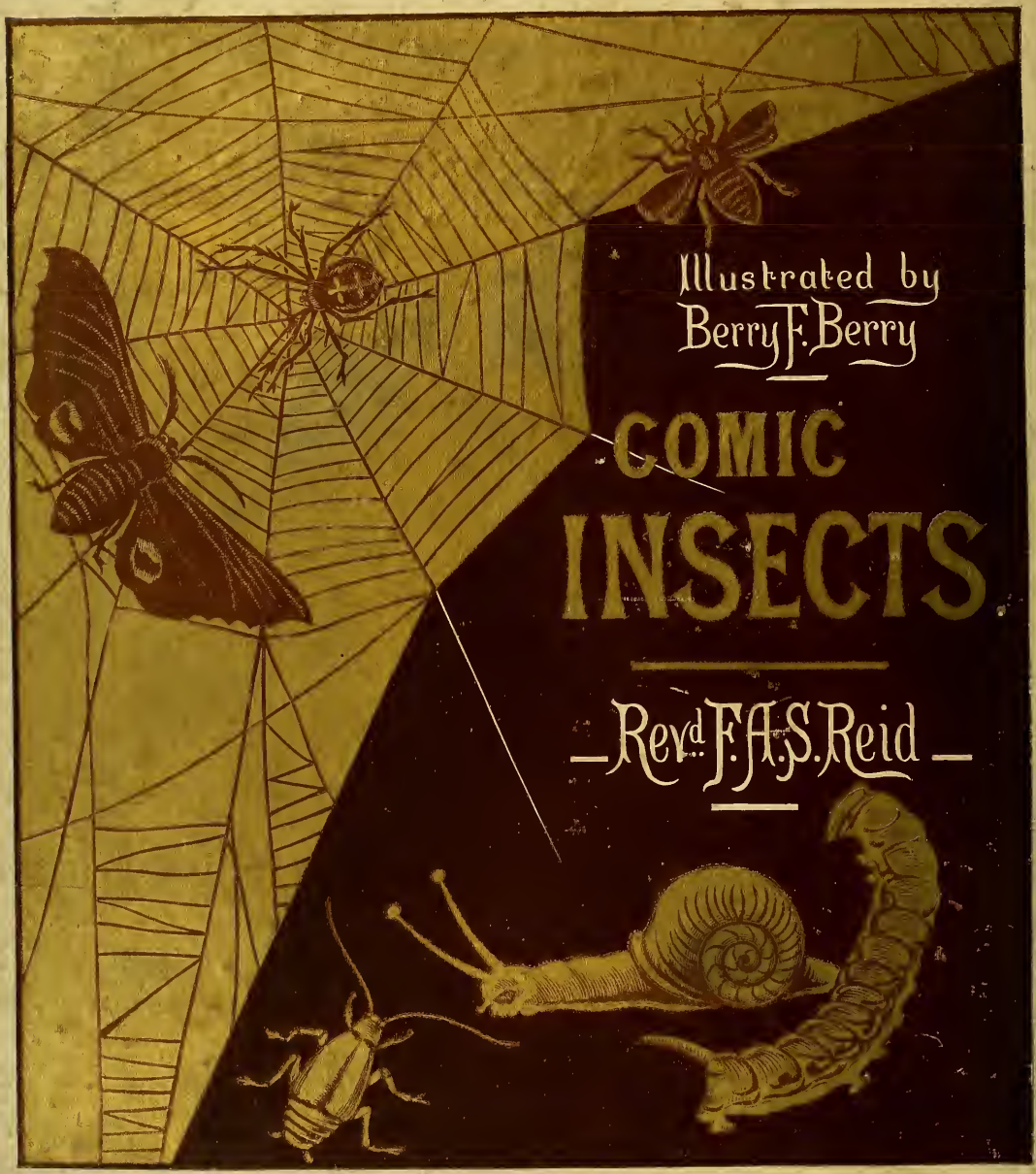
From leaf and fern as they joy in the breeze,
From moss-grown arch and ivy-clad trees,
And catch the flies—the poor little things—
That carelessly use their gossamer wings.

"Their beautiful nets."

It makes one shudder to think of the fate
That giddy bluebottles and gnats may await.
Yet wonder we must, as we watch them spread
Their beautiful nets with their silken thread;

"It makes me shudder to think of the fate
That giddy blue-bottles and gnats may await."

And happier feel at the sign of that Power
That guides each to weave such a fairy-like bower;
And think of that Hand, that no eye can see,
Which fashioned these Insects, and made you and me.



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